

a receptacle having an opening;

a lid[,] comprising a means to seal said opening, said lid having a top surface and a bottom surface and a bore therethrough; and

a plug comprising,

an upper and lower shoulder, at least one of said shoulders is deformable, wherein said plug is seated in said bore of said lid so that said upper shoulder is seated on said top surface of said lid and said lower shoulder is seated on said bottom surface of said lid[, and];

a membrane capable of being penetrated with a material transfer device and which self-reseals to prevent leakage from said receptacle[.] ; and

a plug cover which covers a top surface of said plug and which is capable of being raised and lowered by a user's one hand leaving the user's other hand free to insert a specimen into, or withdraw a specimen from, the specimen container, wherein said plug and said plug cover are connected to each other by a flexible cord.

3. (once amended) The specimen container of claim [2] 1, wherein said plug cover is hingedly fixed to said lid.

4. (once amended) The specimen container of claim [2] 1, wherein said plug cover further comprises a flange which surrounds said upper shoulder of and plug when in a lowered position.

5. (once amended) The specimen container of claim [2] 1, wherein said plug cover further comprises a flange adapted to engage a corresponding flange on said lid when said plug cover is in a lowered position so that said plug cover is releaseably fixed in said lowered position to further inhibit any material from entering or leaking out of said receptacle.

6. (once amended) The specimen of claim [2] 1, wherein said lid has an outer boundary and wherein a portion of said plug cover extends beyond said boundary.

8. (once amended) The specimen container of claim [7]1, wherein said plug, plug cover and cord are a molded unitary member.

14. (once amended) The specimen container of claim [13] 31, wherein said means for altering said outer diameter comprises one or more expandable slits in said plug which extend radially outward from a center of said material transfer device guide.

25. (once amended) A[n improved] specimen container, adapted to enable a user to inject or withdraw materials into or out of said container using a material transfer device with minimal risk of spills or leaks, comprising,

a receptacle having an opening;

a lid[,] comprising a means to seal said opening, said lid having a top surface and a bottom surface and a conduit, extending into said receptacle downward from said bottom surface of said lid, through which a bore having a diameter extends and which comprises a distal lower lip;

a plug having a top surface comprising,

an upper and lower shoulder, wherein said plug is seated in said bore of said lid so that said upper shoulder is seated on said top surface of said lid and said lower shoulder is seated on said lower lip of said conduit,

a membrane capable of being penetrated by said material transfer device and which self-reseals to prevent leakage from said receptacle,

a material transfer device guide having a perimeter and an outer diameter and centered in said conduit, comprising a well which extends downward from said top surface

of said plug and into said conduit, and which comprises an annular wall which extends into said conduit to a floor of said well, wherein said floor forms said membrane, and

a plurality of expandable slits which radiate outward from said perimeter of said material transfer device guide and which enable said outer diameter of said guide to flexibly expand in order to accommodate material transfer devices having varying outer diameters; and

a plug cover which covers a top surface of said plug and which is capable of being raised and lowered by a user's one hand leaving the user's other hand free to insert a specimen into, or withdraw a specimen from, the specimen container.

Please cancel claims 2, 7, 13, 20 - 24, and 30.

Please add the following new claim:

Sub. B4 > 31. A specimen container, adapted to enable a user to inject or withdraw materials into or out of said container using a material transfer device with minimal risk of spills or leaks, comprising,

a receptacle having an opening;

a lid comprising a means to seal said opening, said lid having a top surface and a bottom surface and a bore therethrough; and

a plug comprising,

an upper and lower shoulder, at least one of said shoulders is deformable, wherein said plug is seated in said bore of said lid so that said upper shoulder is seated on said top surface of said lid and said lower shoulder is seated on said bottom surface of said lid;